

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-11 (Canceled)

12. (New) An apparatus operating system comprising:
at least two apparatuses which are to provide output of the same type; and
a control server capable of communicating with each of said at least two
apparatuses,
wherein each of said at least two apparatuses includes a communication section
for transmitting to said control server a notification signal indicative of a pending change or a
change in an output state of said each of said at least two apparatuses, and
wherein said control server includes
(i) a control rule storage section having stored therein a control rule which
associates an output state of one of said at least two apparatuses with an output state to be taken
by another of said at least two apparatuses when said one of said at least two apparatuses is in the
output state thereof,
(ii) a location-related information acquiring section for acquiring location-
related information which is set in association with a location of each of said at least two
apparatuses,
(iii) a determination section for receiving the notification signal from said one
of said at least two apparatuses, and in response to the notification signal, determining an output
state to be taken by said another of said at least two apparatuses based on the control rule and the
location-related information, and
(iv) an operating section for operating said another of said at least two
apparatuses so as to transition into the output state determined by said determination section.
13. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein
said determination section is also for deriving from the location-related
information a distance between said one of said at least two apparatuses and said another of said
at least two apparatuses, and determining not to change the output state of said another of said at
least two apparatuses if the distance, as derived from the location-related information, is equal to

or greater than a predetermined distance.

14. **(New)** The apparatus operating system according to claim 13, wherein
said communication section of said one of said at least two apparatuses is for
transmitting the notification signal when a user has performed an operation of changing the
output state of said one of said at least two apparatuses.

15. **(New)** The apparatus operating system according to claim 14, wherein
said communication section of said one of said at least two apparatuses is for
transmitting the notification signal when the output state of said one of said at least two
apparatuses temporarily changes for a predetermined time period,
said apparatus operating system further includes a state storage section for storing
a pre-operation output state of said another of said at least two apparatuses, and
said operating section is for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses
such that said another of said at least two apparatuses transitions into the output state determined
by said determination section, and after a lapse of the predetermined time period, said operating
section is for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses such that said another of said
at least two apparatuses transitions into the pre-operation output state stored in said state storage
section.

16. **(New)** The apparatus operating system according to claim 13, wherein
said each of said at least two apparatuses is for outputting sound, and the output
state of said each of said at least two apparatuses corresponds to a level of sound outputted from
said each of said at least two apparatuses.

17. **(New)** The apparatus operating system according to claim 13, wherein
said each of said at least two apparatuses comprises one of an air-conditioning
and/or heating apparatus, and the output state of said each of said at least two apparatuses
corresponds to a temperature set by said each of said at least two apparatuses.

18. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 13, wherein
said communication section of said one of said at least two apparatuses is for
transmitting the notification signal when there is a pending increase or an increase of output of
said one of said at least two apparatuses,

the control rule associates the pending increase or increase of the output of said
one of said at least two apparatuses with a reduction of output of said another of said at least two
apparatuses, and

said determination section is for determining the output state of said another of
said at least two apparatuses so as to reduce output of said another of said at least two
apparatuses.

19. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 13, wherein
the control rule associates an output state to be taken by said one of said at least
two apparatuses with a condition for operating said one of said at least two apparatuses so as to
transition into this output state,

said determination section is to use the location-related information to determine
whether the condition is satisfied, and

said operating section is for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses
only when said determination section determines that the condition is satisfied.

20. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 13, wherein

the control rule is to be changed in accordance with time, and

said determination section is for determining the output state to be taken by said
another of said at least two apparatuses based on the control rule and the location-related
information, with the control rule being associated with a time at which the notification signal is
received.

21. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein

said communication section of said one of said at least two apparatuses is for
transmitting the notification signal when a user has performed an operation of changing the

output state of said one of said at least two apparatuses.

22. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 21, wherein
said communication section of said one of said at least two apparatuses is for
transmitting the notification signal when the output state of said one of said at least two
apparatuses temporarily changes for a predetermined time period,
said apparatus operating system further includes a state storage section for storing
a pre-operation output state of said another of said at least two apparatuses, and
said operating section is for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses
such that said another of said at least two apparatuses transitions into the output state determined
by said determination section, and after a lapse of the predetermined time period, said operating
section is for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses such that said another of said
at least two apparatuses transitions into the pre-operation output state stored in said state storage
section.

23. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein
said each of said at least two apparatuses is for outputting sound, and the output
state of said each of said at least two apparatuses corresponds to a level of sound outputted from
said each of said at least two apparatuses.

24. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein
said each of said at least two apparatuses comprises one of an air-conditioning
and/or heating apparatus, and the output state of said each of said at least two apparatuses
corresponds to a temperature set by said each of said at least two apparatuses.

25. (New) The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein
said communication section of said one of said at least two apparatuses is for
transmitting the notification signal when there is a pending increase or an increase of output of
said one of said at least two apparatuses,

the control rule associates the pending increase or increase of the output of said

one of said at least two apparatuses with a reduction of output of said another of said at least two apparatuses, and

said determination section is for determining the output state of said another of said at least two apparatuses so as to reduce output of said another of said at least two apparatuses.

26. **(New)** The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein the control rule associates an output state to be taken by said one of said at least two apparatuses with a condition for operating said one of said at least two apparatuses so as to transition into this output state,

said determination section is to use the location-related information to determine whether the condition is satisfied, and

said operating section is for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses only when said determination section determines that the condition is satisfied.

27. **(New)** The apparatus operating system according to claim 12, wherein

the control rule is to be changed in accordance with time, and

said determination section is for determining the output state to be taken by said another of said at least two apparatuses based on the control rule and the location-related information, with the control rule being associated with a time at which the notification signal is received.

28. **(New)** A control server capable of communicating with at least two apparatuses which are to provide output of the same type, said control server comprising:

a control rule storage section having stored therein a control rule which associates an output state of one of said at least two apparatuses with an output state to be taken by another of said at least two apparatuses when said one of said at least two apparatuses is in the output state thereof;

a location-related information acquiring section for acquiring location-related information which is set in association with a location of each of said at least two apparatuses;

a determination section for receiving from said one of said at least two apparatuses a notification signal indicative of a pending change or a change in an output state of said one of said at least two apparatuses, and in response to the notification signal, determining an output state to be taken by said another of said at least two apparatuses based on the control rule and the location-related information; and

an operating section for operating said another of said at least two apparatuses so as to transition into the output state determined by said determination section,

wherein said determination section is also for deriving from the location-related information a distance between said one of said at least two apparatuses and said another of said at least two apparatuses, and determining not to change the output state of said another of said at least two apparatuses if the distance, as derived from the location-related information, is equal to or greater than a predetermined distance.

29. (New) A method for use in an apparatus operating system including at least two apparatuses, which are to provide output of the same type, and a control server capable of communicating with each of said at least two apparatuses, said control server having stored therein a control rule which associates an output state of one of said at least two apparatuses with an output state to be taken by another of said at least two apparatuses when said one of said at least two apparatuses is in the output state thereof, said method comprising:

transmitting to said control server a notification signal indicative of a pending change or a change in the output state of said one of said at least two apparatuses;

acquiring location-related information which is set in association with a location of each of said at least two apparatuses;

deriving from said location-related information a distance between said one of said at least two apparatuses and said another of said at least two apparatuses, and determining not to change the output state of said another of said at least two apparatuses if the distance, as derived from said location-related information, is equal to or greater than a predetermined distance;

upon receipt of said notification signal, determining the output state to be taken by said another of said at least two apparatuses based on said control rule and the distance between

said one of said at least two apparatuses and said another of said at least two apparatuses, as derived; and

operating said another of said at least two apparatuses so as to transition into the output state as determined when the distance between said one of said at least two apparatuses and said another of said at least two apparatuses, as derived, is less than the predetermined distance.

30. (New) A program which can be read by a computer in a control server capable of communicating with at least two apparatuses which provide output of the same type, with the control server having stored therein a control rule which associates an output state of one of the at least two apparatuses with an output state to be taken by another of the at least two apparatuses when the one of the at least two apparatuses is in the output state thereof, and with said program causing the control server to implement:

a location-related information acquisition step for acquiring location-related information which is set in association with a location of each of the at least two apparatuses;

a derivation step for deriving from the location-related information a distance between the one of the at least two apparatuses and the another of the at least two apparatuses;

a determination step for receiving from the one of the at least two apparatuses a notification signal indicative of a pending change or a change in an output state of the one of said at least two apparatuses, in response to the notification signal, determining the output state to be taken by the another of the at least two apparatuses based on the control rule and the distance between the one of the at least two apparatuses and the another of the at least two apparatuses, as derived, and determining not to change the output state of the another of the at least two apparatuses if the distance, as derived, is equal to or greater than a predetermined distance; and

an operation step for operating the another of the at least two apparatuses so as to transition into the output state as determined when the distance between the one of the at least two apparatuses and the another of the at least two apparatuses, as derived, is less than the predetermined distance.

31. **(New)** An apparatus for use with at least one other apparatus which provides output of a same type as the apparatus, and a control server capable of communicating with each of the apparatus and the at least one other apparatus,

wherein each of the apparatus and the at least one other apparatuses includes a communication section for transmitting to the control server a notification signal indicative of a pending change or a change in an output state, and

wherein the control server includes

(i) a control rule storage section having stored therein a control rule which associates, from among the apparatus and the at least one apparatus, an output state of one apparatus with an output state to be taken by another apparatus when said one apparatus is in the output state thereof,

(ii) a location-related information acquiring section for acquiring location-related information which is set in association with a location of each of said one apparatus and said another apparatus,

(iii) a determination section for receiving the notification signal from said one apparatus, and in response to the notification signal, determining an output state to be taken by said another apparatus based on the control rule and the location-related information, and

(iv) an operating section for operating said another apparatus so as to transition into the output state determined by said determination section.

32. **(New)** The apparatus and control server according to claim 31, wherein

said determination section is for deriving from the location-related information a distance between said one apparatus and said another apparatus, and for determining not to change the output state of said another apparatus if the distance, as derived from the location-related information, is equal to or greater than a predetermined distance.